(b) if so, whether Government have formulated any strategy to check cheap imports with a view to protecting the interests of domestic industry and the farmers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and by when arrangements would be made therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) In order to counteract, trade distortion caused by dumping/subsidy and the consequential injury to the domestic industry, the Government has set up the Directorate General of Anti-Dumping & Allied Duties (DGAD) to conduct anti-dumping/anti-subsidy investigations and make recommendations to the Central Government for imposition of anti-dumping or countervailing measures, where appropriate. The Government has also set up the Directorate General of Safeguards under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance to investigate and recommend safeguard duty when faced with situation of increased imports of any commodity which causes or threatens to cause serious injury to domestic producers. Besides, imports of commodities declared as sensitive are constantly being monitored by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). DGAD has from 1992 till date initiated 185 anti-dumping investigations involving various countries. In these cases, final findings have been issued in 162 cases, preliminary findings in 2 cases and 12 cases are under investigations for issue of preliminary/ final findings. 9 cases have been closed after initiation. The Directorate General of Safeguards has so far carried out 18 investigations and measures have been recommended in 11 cases.

Permission to visit Sharda Mata Shrine

†231. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has received representations from organisations of Kashmiri Pandit for visiting Sharda Mata Shrine located in PoK;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Ministry in this regard;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether there is any possibility to grant permission to Kashmiri Pandits for visiting Sharda Mata Shrine in near future; and

(d) if so, the time-frame thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The visit of pilgrims between India and Pakistan is covered under the bilateral 'Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines-1974'. The Protocol lists the names of shrines in both the countries for the visit of pilgrims and the 'Sharda Mata Temple' is not included in the list presently. During the talks between Prime Minister and President of Pakistan held on April 16-18, 2005, it was agreed to pursue further measures to enhance interaction and cooperation across the LoC including agreed meeting points for divided families, trade, pilgrimages and cultural interaction. It has been the endeavour of Government to expand the scope of the Protocol to enhance people to people contact between the two countries. It is not possible to give any time-frame in the matter.

India-Singapore MoU

232. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Singapore have signed a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the fears of Indian companies about Chinese goods entering India at concessional duty through Singapore has been allayed and if so, the safeguards adopted to protect the domestic industry from third country imports; and

(d) the extent to which this MoU would benefit India in boosting its trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) has been signed